

Information on Royal Academy of Dance Examination Studies

Below is information regarding the ballet program for your son or daughter. The Royal Academy of Dance offers two avenues of training, graded and vocational. Once students enter their preteen and teen years, we encourage study of both streams at D.I.D. We hope you find this information helpful and are happy to answer any questions you might have about the Royal Academy of Dance syllabus and training.

Graded Exams to Higher Grades

(Pre Primary, Primary, Junior Grades 1-2, Intermediate Grade 3-5, Higher Grades 6-7, Grade 8 Examination Award)

The basis of our ballet program is the Royal Academy of Dance graded syllabus. Students begin with junior grades and work towards upwards. The higher grades 6-8 are created for mature dancers and contain beautiful choreography which includes challenging classical enchainments and solos as well as free movement and character work. The Grade 8 is the final award of the graded levels and students who achieve this level will receive an award certificate. Students in the grade 8 exam appear in the exam room on their own and perform a series of demanding solo variations. Pointe work is not seen in the exam although many of our higher grade students also study pointe work in addition to their syllabus classes and most students also studying some vocational work.

Vocational Grades

(Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced Foundation, Advanced 1, Advanced 2, Solo Seal)

Vocational exams are geared towards students who have the physical aptitude to consider dance as a career. Many of our students will enter intermediate foundation and hopefully intermediate. Fewer carry on to take the Advanced levels. Vocational exam training is a very serious commitment and requires hours in the classroom, maturity and a positive response to corrections at all times. Dancers being considered for vocational exams need the physical aptitude for the work. Students will be chosen to enter into a vocational exam when their teachers feel they are ready.

We will determine by November who will be ready for spring vocational examinations. Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced Foundation students will be required to take a mock exam in November. We will determine at that time which students will be entered for the spring. Some students may study the vocational grade but not end up taking the exam and others may need more time to work towards exams (we may recommend an additional time studying a grade if they are not exam ready).

FAQs

Which is right for my child – vocational or higher grades? The work for both the higher graded exams and the vocational exams is both challenging and exciting. A successful outcome with positive results is our priority. Most students are able to work towards the graded stream but only some students can continue with the vocational stream. In many cases, we encourage students to do both streams simultaneously so they can benefit from both. Please understand that even though your son or daughter is studying a specific grade (whether it be higher grades OR vocational grades) there is no guarantee that they will be able to take their exam.

When will we determine when girls are ready for pointe work? The general rule of thumb is that students begin pointe work at the intermediate foundation level. We will look at the students' age and development. Also, students may have a staggered entry into pointe work depending on their strength of posture, legs and feet as well as shape and flexibility of their feet and ankles. Some students may not be suitable for pointe work but can still continue to dance and learn the syllabus.

Do students ever do both Higher Grades and Vocational Exams simultaneously? Yes – typically Intermediate/Advanced Foundation students take grade 6, Advanced 1 students take grade 7 and Advanced 2 students take grade 8. There is some flexibility with that timeline, but that is typically how students progress towards their graduation.